

# Wesleyan College News

Volume XIII

Number 1

Winter 1984

## Wesleyan Elects 22nd President



DR. ROBERT K. ACKERMAN

Dr. Robert K. Ackerman, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, has been elected the 22nd President of Wesleyan College.

At a called meeting of the Board of Trustees on Friday, December 16, 1983, Chairman Frank C. Jones announced that Dr. Ackerman, 50, would assume his duties at Wesleyan in the spring of 1984 after concluding his responsibilities at Drew. He will succeed Acting President Dr. J. Frederick Wilson who has led the college since August, 1983.

Dr. Ackerman has held his present position as dean and professor at Drew since 1975. The university is a four-year, co-educational liberal arts and theological school, affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Founded in 1866, with a current student population of 2,200, Drew is consistently ranked with the nation's top 50 independent colleges.

Prior to 1975, Dr. Ackerman was vice-president for academic affairs and professor of history at Erskine College in South Carolina. A member of Phi Beta Kappa, he began his career as an archivist in the South Carolina Archives in 1961. Previously, he served as Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps Reserves.

*continued on page 5*

### ..... and representatives of the constituencies respond .....

"His past accomplishments demonstrate that he is well prepared to provide effective leadership at Wesleyan . . ."

Frank C. Jones, Chairman, Board of Trustees

"When he visited the campus . . . we found him to be an articulate proponent and committed supporter of the liberal arts."

Dr. Kayron McMinn, Dean of the College

"We welcome him as an educator, scholar, and fellow teacher and look forward with high anticipation to his leadership."

Ann Munck, President of the Faculty

"By accepting the challenge of the presidency, he confirms for all of us that the Wesleyan ideal is valid and valued . . ."

Laura Sullivan Barkley, President, Wesleyan Alumnae Association

"... We are highly pleased to welcome Dr. Ackerman, who, because of his strong background and dedication to the church ... will continue to lead Wesleyan in its rich traditions ..."

Joel D. McDavid, Bishop, Southern Conference of The United Methodist Church

"It is an honor to stand before him ..."

Libbie Powell, representing Mary Ann Cunningham for the Student Government Association

90512





*Dr. Ackerman (3rd. from right) and members of the Wesleyan Community walk to Porter Building from the Candler Alumnae Building following his election announcement December 16.*



*Following the election, Dr. and Mrs. Ackerman receive congratulations from Frank C. Jones, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Rev. Joel D. McDavid, Bishop of the Southern Conference of the United Methodist Church.*



*Dr. Ackerman takes a break from his academic responsibilities to take Petey for a stroll.*



*Following his election by the Board of Trustees, Dr. Ackerman addresses the 200 guests assembled in the Anderson Dining Hall for a luncheon held in his honor.*



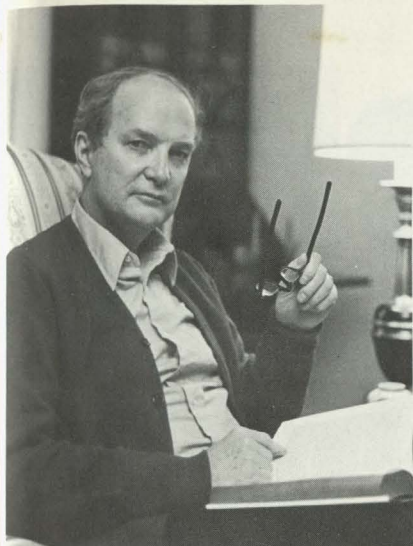
*Dr. Ackerman, a jogger and tennis enthusiast, states he has "a sound mind in a healthy body."*



*"My family and I extend greetings to the Wesleyan College family. We had intended to return South at a time when we have productive years ahead, and we are delighted that Wesleyan is to be the place."*



# Dr. Ackerman Addresses the Future



## 22nd President, continued from page 1

Since 1971, the new president has been chairman of accreditation teams for the Southern and Middle States Associations of Schools. He has written and lectured on the history of South Carolina, southern religious thought, and southern sectionalism.

Dr. Ackerman, a native of South Carolina, received his Bachelor and Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from the University of South Carolina. In 1975, he was awarded a certificate from the Institute for Educational Management at Harvard University. In addition to attending annual alumni workshops at the Institute, he has participated in seminars dealing with the liberal arts, financial management, and law and higher education. Most recently, he took part in the Institute of Developmental Theory, Critical Thinking and Liberal Learning at the University of Chicago in 1982.

Dr. Ackerman is a past president and active member of the Madison Kiwanis International Chapter and is the current president of the Board of Trustees of the Colonial Symphony Orchestra of New Jersey.

The new president is married to the former May Morgan. Also a native of South Carolina, Mrs. Ackerman attended Columbia College and the University of South Carolina. An active volunteer in Madison, she currently serves as president of the United Methodist Women and is a member of the Colonial Symphony Guild. She is concerned especially with the needs of the elderly,

My family and I extend greetings to the Wesleyan College family. We are pleased to become a part of this distinguished institution and to have a role in its future. We had intended to return South at a time when we have many productive years ahead, and we are delighted that Wesleyan is to be the place.

I am a southern historian, Methodist layman and educator committed to the liberal arts; and I am confident that there is a great future for a woman's college of the quality of Wesleyan.

As a historian of the South, I further believe that no other region holds quite the promise that the South does now, and its future — and Wesleyan's — can move forward with pride and wisdom by building on the best of their traditions.

I see the liberal arts as critical to the educational process which continues throughout life. They are the cornerstone upon which all other learning is structured. Perhaps the most substantive study of all — the Acton Study entitled *Four Critical Years* — reports that students learn more in a small liberal arts environment. In probing the available studies on women's liberal arts institutions, I have become certain that an academic environment such as Wesleyan offers is ideal as that cornerstone.

It is clear that the tide is now running with women's colleges. We know from good research that women who attend women's colleges out-achieve others by a significant margin. We must in candor say to young women that if they want a job quickly, above all else, then they should go to a vocational school. However, if they want to prepare for a lifetime of leadership, they should acquire a liberal education.

As far as the adequacies of pre-

college preparation are concerned, I feel that the move from senior high school ought to involve a gap. I don't think we need to be baffled by students with poor academic backgrounds. If they are reasonably bright and we're willing to work with them, they can be educated. Formal education is not the only means. They learn by living together, not apart; they learn by eating together in a dining hall and not off campus; they learn by participating in group activities — even frivolous ones; they learn far more by all this than they do by themselves.

This liberal arts cornerstone is derived from the traditions of the Church as an institution. From this heritage come the bases on which we are able to study and begin to understand ultimately how to deal with the social questions confronting our civilization. We cannot know ourselves and our roles in addressing these questions before we first learn how they have been dealt with throughout history. Furthermore, church-based colleges *insist* that students deal with these questions.

I believe firmly in the concept of a sound mind in a healthy body. It's important that we stress to our students the necessity of health and fitness. The by-product is increased intellectual capacity. I also believe that the intensive study of specific subjects through seminars which insist on critical thinking is highly useful to stimulate a student's mind and I intend to work to enhance these areas.

I envision Wesleyan as not only an undergraduate institution for women, but also a center for further education for its alumnae and southern women leaders in general. A good phrase is, "The New Woman in the New South." What an exciting thing this can be for us!

participating in the Meals on Wheels program and "Fish," a community outreach program for senior citizens.

The Ackermans have three children: Mark and Roxanne, both college students in South Carolina; and Bettye, a high school senior.

Since his election, Dr. Ackerman

has visited Wesleyan on a regular basis, meeting with trustees, faculty, alumnae and staff to work out the multitude of details involved in a presidential transition.

His formal inauguration has been scheduled for October, 1984.

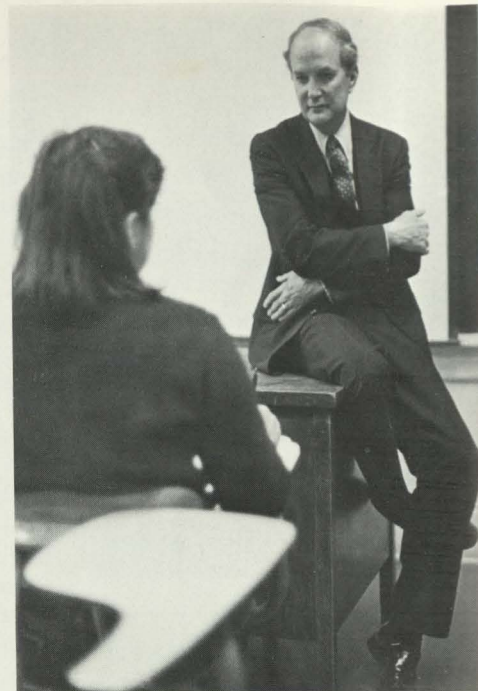




Dr. Ackerman receives a call of congratulations from an old friend.



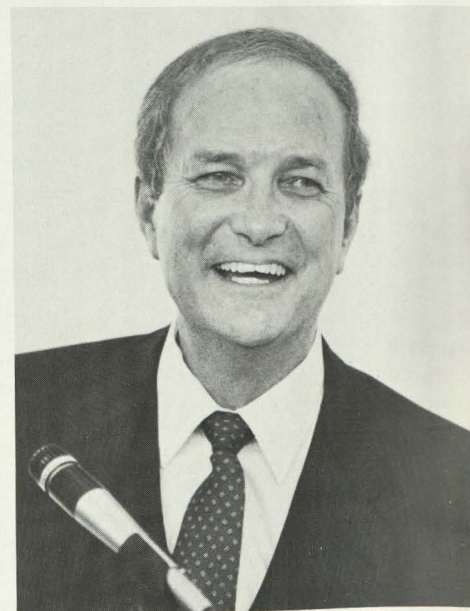
Dr. Ackerman enjoys a quiet moment at home with the youngest of his children, Bettye.



"... The move from senior high school ought to involve a gap . . . if we're willing to work with them (the students), they can be educated."



Dr. Ackerman and faculty friends discuss the highlights of his nine years as Dean at Drew.



"Wesleyan as a center for further education for its alumnae and southern women leaders in general-what an exciting thing this can be for us!"



The dog commands his share of attention as the humans try to plan for the move to Macon.

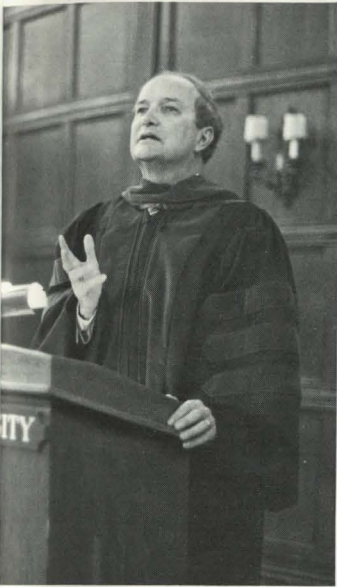


An active Methodist layman, Dr. Ackerman, with May, discuss church business with The Reverend James Tiller, pastor of the Madison United Methodist Church and Mrs. Paul Hardin, wife of the president of Drew University.



# DR. ROBERT K. ACKERMAN

## A Profile



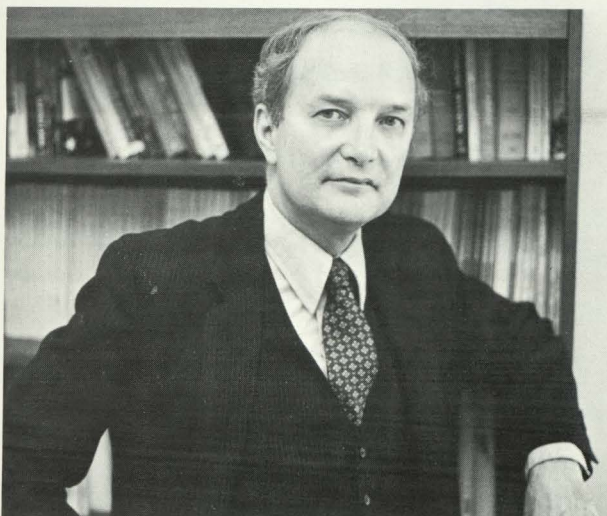
lucator committed to the liberal arts."



Dr. Ackerman discusses his speech for Alumnae Weekend with Laura Sullivan Barkley '68, President of the Alumnae Association.



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"We must in candor say to young women that if they want a job quickly, above all else, then they should go to a vocational school. However, if they want to prepare for a lifetime of leadership, they should acquire a liberal education."



"It is clear that the tide is now running with women's colleges."

"I've been facinated by Tennyson's *Ulysses*":

I am part of all that I have met;  
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'  
Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades  
For ever and for ever when I move.  
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!  
As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled life  
Were all too little, and of one to me

Little remains; but every hour is saved  
From that eternal silence, something more,  
A bringer of new things; and vile it were  
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,  
And this gray spirit yearning in desire  
to follow knowledge like a sinking star,  
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought . . ."



# New President Featured Speaker For Alumnae Weekend

Alumnae Weekend is April 6, 7, 8, 1984 at Wesleyan College. Dr. Robert K. Ackerman, new President of Wesleyan, will be the featured speaker at the noon annual meeting on Saturday, April 7.

All alumnae are invited to attend the weekend activities. Alumnae, faculty, students, administration and Wesleyan trustees have a special invitation to a 5:00 p.m. reception in the Oval Hall to meet Dr. and Mrs. Robert K. Ackerman. Watch the mail for the Alumnae Weekend Reservation Brochure with details of the weekend.

## Distinguished Award Recipients Named

### DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT:

Hazel Holmes Burns, '41  
Macon, Georgia

Mary Ann Mathews Pease, '41  
Columbus, Georgia

Theresa Rett English, '49  
Macon, Georgia

Alice Ann Hamilton, '53  
Decatur, Georgia

### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE:

Helen Moore Person, '22  
Clarksville, Tennessee

Marian Waxelbaum Kaufman, '38  
Macon, Georgia

## Reunion Class Representatives Alumnae Weekend April 6, 7, 8, 1984

1919 - LUCIA CHAPPELL DOMINGOS  
1920 - MAE KELLY CLEMENTS  
1921 - MAUDE BRADLEY LEE  
1929 - NANCY MADDOX RIVERS - CONSERVATORY  
1929 - ELIZABETH GILL BLALOCK  
1934 - MILDRED TARPLEY PERRY - GOLDEN  
1934 - FAY PETREA HACKETT - CONSERVATORY  
1949 - MARY LANE EDWARDS CHEEK - JADE  
1949 - EVELYN BERNSTEIN SACKS - CONSERVATORY  
1953 - ALICE ANN HAMILTON  
1953 - MARGARET SMITH PEET - CONSERVATORY  
1954 - NELL WARREN HICKS  
1955 - FRANCES MOULTHROP GORDON  
1959 - MANITA BOND DEAN - SILVER  
1964 - ELIZABETH SIMS  
1965 - GLORIA DOLLAR KNIGHT  
1966 - LUCILE ADAMS MATHEWS  
1968 - GAYLE CLARK  
1974 - DEBBIE STOCKTON LAUGHLIN - 10th  
1979 - KATHERINE BRELAND BRADLEY  
1980 - MARCIA KNOBLOCK  
1982 - SUSAN HOLLOWAY

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